



Rockport Millbrook Meadow Committee

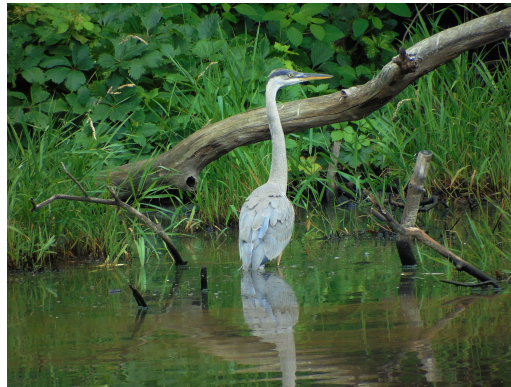
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www.millbrookmeadow.org

*Charmaine Blanchard
Laura Hallowell
Shannon Mason, Vice Chair
Barbara Sparks
Stephanie Woolf*

*Samuel W. Coulbourn, Chair
Marcia Lombardo, Treasurer
Aileen Morrissey
Frederick H. Tarr III*

Minutes of Meeting Wednesday, July 13th, 2016 Trustees' Room, Rockport Public Library



Photos of wildlife by Adriane Schulze and Pete Bollini have attracted attention to our Pond.

SUMMARY: Members acknowledged that we will probably be forced to delay dredging until September 2017. Implementation Plan is coming to fruition. Public Meeting planned for July 21. Plan for relocating wildlife prior to dredging detailed.

7:00 p.m. Chairman **Sam Coulbourn** called the meeting to order. Members present: **Barbara Sparks, Marcia Lombardo, Shannon Mason, Stephanie Woolf, Aileen Morrissey, Ted Tarr and Charmaine Blanchard.** **Gunilla Caulfield, and Eric Hutchins,** Advisors to the RMMC, were present. **Chris DeRosa** was also present. **Laura Hallowell** arrived at 7:41 p.m.

1. Public Input. Ted announced that Union cemetery is a mess, with stones overturned, and need for a real cleanup.

2. Committee Business.

Treasurer's Report. Marcia reported that balance in operating account is \$885.12; balance in restoration funds from the Lura Hall Phillips Trust is \$89,816.39.

Approve Minutes of June 8th, 2016. Ted moved to approve and Stephanie seconded. All voted to approve.

New Members. Aileen asked if we were limited at nine. Yes, Sam said. When Lura was chair we had over 20. If we have a proposed member we should ask the Selectmen to approve an increase in membership to provide an odd number.

Page | 2



New Meadow Kiosk

3. Fundraising Sub-Committee, Publicity and Community Outreach.

Shannon reported on the Fundraising subcommittee meeting held June 27th.

At that meeting Susan Gray suggested that we plan our drive with the objective of achieving our fund raising goal of \$500,000 all at once. Members aim to conduct this drive in Spring 2017.

Betsy will help with grant applications in the fall of this year, particular environmental grants. Susan will talk to Ed Becker of Essex County Greenbelt about possible grants. Betsy will pursue Cape Ann Savings Bank.

Susan also suggested that we develop a tagline for our drive, e.g. "Millbrook as a Legacy".

Also suggested was a large ad in the Gloucester *Times*, thanking our donors and listing them all, with idea, "supporting our Meadow is the thing to do!" We should couple this with letters to the Editor from donors.

Group also discussed supporting generational connections, convening residents who grew up here and who have fond memories of childhood skating on Pond, fishing, playing in Meadow, etc.

Shannon suggests that since our brochure supply is dwindling, we prepare another, perhaps front and back card for use in card racks around town, and a larger size for posting.

A "thank you" event in the Meadow for large donors was also suggested. Eric, on that idea, suggested that we might have an annual "Meadow Appreciation Day". It could include a wildlife exhibit, of the kind that he and NOAA have put on in the past, perhaps a small carnival, with food, etc. "It doesn't have to be a huge event," he suggested. That would be a good time to offer walks around the Pond and Meadow to show what is planned, and to describe features, history, etc. Sam added that we had also discussed

getting enactors dressed as they would have been in 1702, replicating the division of the Town at Davison's Run, with Pooles on the north, Tarrs on the south, or perhaps describing life in the Meadow in the 19th century.

Eric suggested that we should offer at least two such walks this summer, to prepare a receptive audience for Town Meeting. He recommended we schedule a **Meadow Appreciation Day in mid-August, 2016 (perhaps August 13 or 20).**

Page | 3

Laura suggested that she could install little flags that show the contour of the Mill Brook, but Eric suggested that to do that prior to Town Meeting might bring up opposition when we want support.

Plans for Meadow Outreach Information Session at Library, Thurs. July 21st.

Shannon started discussion on the Meadow information session planned for next week. Stephanie suggested that we focus our information vis-à-vis "What does it mean to me?" so that when we talk about the Pond, we describe the benefits to residents, as well as any inconveniences during dredging, and not dwell on funding and technical details that do not concern the public. Eric suggested that our message can also be "We heard your comments at earlier visioning sessions, and what is planned is the result." Ted suggested that we describe how the ecosystem got to this state, and what is planned to correct it.

Eric will not be present at the July 21 meeting, but will provide a detailed description of what will be done to relocate wildlife in preparation for the dredging. That has been an item of intense local interest.

4. Update status of Millbrook Meadow Restoration

Barbara asked "Why does the Meadow look so bad?" She noted that in recent visits she has never seen it look so bad, particularly the Frog Pond.

Eric answered that one reason is that we are having a serious drought right now, so that there is a layer of algae and other matter on the Pond and the Frog Pond, the Mill Brook is nearly dry, and all of the stuff meant to be dredged from the Frog Pond is in clear view. Also, he added, the "dredging" of the Frog Pond was a "botch job", since it was done sooner than optimum to take advantage of an expiring permit, and it was done by DPW, which does not have expertise, at a time when there was too much flow to allow emptying the small pond.

Weir Boards. Eric added that the boards used to raise the Pond level leak below the surface, so that the water seeps out of the Pond, leaving the skim of algae on the surface. It's unhealthy, unattractive and unnecessary. We need to get DPW to repair the Boards so that water flows over them, instead of between. We asked Laura to coordinate this.

Status of Permitting. Laura reported recent conversations she has had with Joe Parisi, Director of Public Works. Permitting is proceeding, but it is likely not to be completed until September. If Town Meeting approves the \$250,000 recommended by Community Preservation Committee, then there will be preparation of bid package by MMI (at least two weeks), then advertising for bids, then selection and qualification of contractor, and signing of a contract, all with the objective of starting dredging in early October and being finished by the end of December 2016. Add to this the lengthy process of

relocating wildlife, which can take several weeks. **The result: Starting dredging in October 2016 is highly unlikely.** Joe concurs in this, Laura said.

Barbara expressed disagreement with the idea of giving up on possibly starting dredging this fall, saying that delaying will hurt our fund raising.

Frog Pond. Laura said that the plan for removal of all rocks around the Frog Pond may need to be reconsidered. Eric talked about impervious fabric beneath the rocks to prevent leakage from the Pond softening the surrounding earth behind and under the lining rocks.

Page | 4

Planting Plans, including Dogwood thicket, invasives. Laura related that since invasives have been cut back and the whole project has moved slowly forward, we have had time to see that some parts of the MMI planting plan may need modification. Conservation Commission is very insistent on retaining the dogwood thicket, even though the new brook design will cut through it. Laura added that Polatin is scheduled to return soon to continue their work on invasives. This will cost \$1000, already voted upon.

Options and approach to moving fish and turtles. Eric has done considerable research on this and outlined the kinds of permits that will be required for us to move turtles, fish and eels from Mill Pond to Loop Pond. He has identified Rick Roth of the Cape Ann Vernal Pond Team as a person who is very capable of leading this effort, and is well respected by local regulatory bodies. Eric also mentioned the Project Kestrel Adventure for helping with turtle and fish transfer. He outlined a plan for carrying out trapping and moving on six consecutive Saturdays, which will be a very good outreach event, interesting for participation by students, and may offer grant opportunities. He also mentioned that we may want to tag the turtles, which will be another good mark of stewardship.

5. Program for Submitting Master Implementation Plan. Laura and Frank Hassler have prepared a detailed plan to describe the process that we are following in order to get Town support for the restoration of Meadow and Pond. Frank modeled this on one he had prepared several years ago for the development of the Community House. Members discussed this document and agreed as to the basic idea. Frank noted that since 2012 this project has been studied, measured, designed, reviewed, and much money expended to prepare all the design documents and permit applications. No request for local public funds has been so carefully and thoroughly prepared, he said. Sam thanked Frank and Laura for preparing this document, and thanked advisors and members who have submitted changes. Director Public Works has also provided very helpful changes.

This document will be circulated and presented to cognizant boards and committees, with the expectation that they will sign off on it, and then it would be presented for approval at Town Meeting.

Eric suggested that presenting it at the Fall Town Meeting would be problematic, (1) because it would be nearly impossible to obtain all the sign-offs by then, and (2) it might tend to confuse the basic issue of the CPC recommendation of \$250,000 to complete dredging. He also suggested that the document should be crisp, with a short Executive

Summary, and a final paragraph, which defines exactly what boards are signing. We don't want them to sign off on the whole document, with all its details. Basically, we want to produce a document which represents town concurrence in restoring Pond and Meadow. Laura, Frank and Sam will take the next steps in incorporating changes and circulate again to members.

6. Meadow Use Application Form

Modifications proposed by Town Administrator. Charmaine has cleared most of the items that the Town Administrator wants to change on the form, but has been unable to talk with her about one item. Members agreed to defer this item until the August meeting.

7. Meadow Events

Jyllka Wedding, Sat. August 6th — moved to private location

Acoustic Festival, Sun. August 7th, discussed event. Shannon moved to recommend approval of event, Ted seconded, all voted to recommend approval. Sam will recommend approval to Town Administrator.

Shannon asked the Committee about our presence at the event, as we have manned a booth previously. Eric and others suggested that we provide visual displays to describe our project. Eric described a pop-up display that withstands wind, etc. Marcia suggested we might array that display with our information kiosk. Laura moved that we plan display boards for this event, Aileen seconded. All voted affirmatively.

Meadow Appreciation Day (Recommended by Eric) Saturday, (a.m.) Aug. 13 or 20. [Discuss]

Conrad-Young Wedding, Sept. 17th. Shannon moved to recommend approval, Ted seconded, all voted to recommend approval. Shannon will recommend approval to Town Administrator.

Rockport Music Gala, Sat. August 27th —update on plans. No updates.

8. New Business. None

9. Next Meeting: Wednesday, August 10th, 2016, at Trustees' Room, Rockport Public Library.

10. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Approved:

Samuel W. Coulbourn

Copy to: Town Administrator; Director of Public Works; Conservancy Board and Advisors; Conservation Agent; DPW Commissioners